

Leytonstone fall as Blues make it ten on the trot

FIRST half goals by Keith Mead and Steve Perrin kept Wycombe Wanderers right on the heels of Rothmans Isthmian League leaders Enfield, when the Blues swept to a 2-0 triumph at Leytonstone on Saturday. Wycombe's victory was clinically efficient and after taking a second minute lead they never looked back.

This was Wanderers' 10th league win on the trot and it must put them in just the right frame of mind for Good Friday's home fixture against Enfield — a match that will have a major bearing on the championship.

To say Wycombe were rarely in any trouble at Leytonstone would be an understatement. They completely dominated the 90 minutes and were totally

superior in every department to their opponents. Had the surface been firm, it would have been at least a repeat of the Blues' 5-1 victory over the Essex club at Loakes Park. As it was, Wycombe missed several second half chances to win themselves a £40 bonus but each time the mud came to Leytonstone's rescue.

well. Sometimes playing the long ball, sometimes short inter-passing and continual use of the wings put Leytonstone firmly on the rack and with the visitors winning the bulk of the possession, the pressure was relentless. If you can maintain a steady supply of chances a goal is bound to go in sooner or later and although Wycombe's ratio

post. The goal must have done Wycombe's confidence the world of good while Leytonstone probably began thinking of that 5-1 hiding at Loakes Park.

Wanderers, squelching and sliding in the middle, began to dictate events after that early lead. Terry Reardon and Kennedy established a vice-like

tipped over the bar by Mackie and then the home side's defence cracked again in the 33rd minute.

Horsemans took the ball down the left, stretching the home back four. His cross was missed by Keith Searle but Perrin swooped in and sent a glorious 15 yard drive past Mackie on the left foot.

An indirect free kick for obstruction against Alan Phillips was well cut out by John Maskell five minutes before the break but apart from that incident and a shot that skidded past the far post, the Wycombe goal was never threatened.

In a bid to break Wycombe's monopoly in midfield, the Stones switched Len Rayner to midfield and brought on substitute Jeff Flowers. The gamble failed, however, as Wanderers soon resumed their all-out assault on the home net.

A chip in the 59th minute by the quiet Mick Hollifield put Searle through the middle but he pushed the ball just too far and enabled Mackie to scamper out and gather. A few minutes later, Horsemans had a great chance to increase the lead. Gary Hand, whose distribution was poor in the first half, flighted the ball over from the left and found Horsemans, who jinked between two defenders but then ballooned the ball over the top when faced only by the 'keeper.

A stray back pass by Mead muddled Maskell's shirt for the first time in the half but after a quick corner, Leytonstone were driven back by a series of accurate passes that took play deep into the home half. Chances were carved out almost by the minute. A cheeky back heel by Perrin sent Horsemans snaking through again but this time Bobby Hamers raced back

There was an anxious moment for the Wycombe camp when Keith Mead caught his ankle in a midfield tackle but after being carried off the field, he came back on and played the remaining 16 minutes.

During those minutes, Wanderers piled on the agony for Leytonstone with a non-stop barrage on the home goal. An overhead kick by Horsemans set up a good chance for Searle but the centre forward missed his shot as he skidded in the mud and although recovering well, Mackie was well positioned to deal with his eventual shot.

Throughout the second half Leytonstone battled along bravely trying to find some way of mounting Wycombe's superior skills. But when they did get the ball it was often wasted by inaccurate passing. It must have been depressing the way Phillips, Mead and Alexander broke up their attacks almost nonchalantly and set the visiting forwards away again.

Before the close there was just time for an amazing goalmouth scramble in the Leytonstone box. Horsemans took the ball past one, two, three defenders, jinking one way and then the next but after various shots had been blocked, the Stones managed to clear the ball to safety.

That late spell of pressure purely emphasised the class gap between these two teams. The gap will be considerably narrower against Enfield but with Wycombe Wanderers in such dominating form at the present time, three points look very much on the cards at Loakes Park on Good Friday.

LEYTONSTONE: A. Mackie; L. Rayner, J. Charles, M. Smith, R. Hamers; S. Twidell (sub. J. Flowers 45 mins.); M. Cherry, J. Smith; R. Page, J. Brooks, G. Parker.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; D. Alexander, K. Mead, A. Phillips, G. Hand; H. Kennedy, T. Reardon, J. Hollifield; A. Horsemans, K. Searle, S. Perrin. Sub. D. Evans (not used).

Referee: V. McCowan.
Half-time: 0-2. Goalscorers: Wycombe — Mead (2), Perrin (33).

By STUART EARP Leytonstone 0, Wycombe Wanderers 2

The Granleigh Road pitch was more like a quagmire even before the players had warmed up and Wanderers deserve great credit for the standard of football produced. Leytonstone played their part too, as did referee McCowan — one of the best referees I have seen this season.

It was Wycombe's variety of attacking that served them so

should have been higher, they had the advantage of taking the lead before most of us had got comfortable in our seats.

The opener came from a corner won by Perrin in the second minute. Howard Kennedy lifted the ball into the goalmouth where Tony Horsemans headed through the defence. Leytonstone had their chance to clear but failed and Mead pounced to crack the ball home at the far

grip while Perrin continually menaced upfront and Dave Alexander brought an additional danger for Leytonstone by overlapping constantly from full back.

Only a fine stop by Tony Mackie prevented Perrin from making it 2-0 in the 23rd and as Leytonstone began to thump the ball anywhere to get a moment's breather, Wycombe turned the screw. A Kennedy free kick was

ROTHMANS ISTHMIAN LEAGUE Division One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	30	24	3	3	68	16	75
Wycombe W.	30	21	6	3	58	24	69
Dagenham	26	19	3	4	53	24	60
Dulwich Hamlet	30	18	5	7	53	26	59
Leatherhead	30	17	5	8	60	34	56
Ilford	29	15	6	8	65	39	51
Tooting and Mitcham	29	15	6	8	38	34	51
Slough Town	30	14	5	11	54	37	47
Sutton United	31	14	4	13	42	39	46
Oxford City	31	13	5	13	43	40	44
Hendon	31	12	5	14	46	54	41
Walthamstow Avenue	33	11	7	15	46	47	40
Hitchin Town	28	12	3	13	39	46	39
Kingstonian	34	12	3	19	40	55	38
Bishop's Stortford	31	11	4	16	39	49	37
Leytonstone	33	10	6	17	33	46	37
Woking	30	10	4	16	48	53	36
Barking	33	11	3	19	42	66	36
Clapton	32	7	10	16	42	57	31
Hayes	32	7	18	35	61	28	28
Walton and Hersham	30	7	3	20	29	78	24
Bromley	32	5	1	26	20	76	16

WYCOMBE'S 2-0 victory at Leytonstone on Saturday keeps them in second place behind Enfield in the Rothmans Isthmian League, Division One. But the Blues have now cut the gap to six points.

Enfield were involved in the London Senior Cup on Saturday at Leatherhead, where they were held to a 0-0 draw — a result they can hardly welcome.

Once again Dagenham were involved with cup commitments, this time the Essex Senior Cup semi-final. They won 3-2 against Barking at home and are now four matches adrift of the top two clubs.

Wanderers, it seemed, were somewhat lucky to play their fixture at Granleigh Road on Saturday as many of the other games were postponed due to the state of pitches. Tooting and Mitcham, enjoying one of the best seasons for some time, won 3-1 at Hayes while Hendon beat Woking 4-1 at Claremont Road. The rest of the programme was postponed.